

A SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ON  
KEMP'S RIDLEY (LEPIDOCHELYS KEMPI) STRANDINGS  
1980 - 1987  
ATLANTIC AND GULF COASTS OF THE UNITED STATES

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The Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) serves to document and compile data on strandings of marine turtles in coastal areas of the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. A total of 10,105 stranded marine turtles have been reported through the network since it's formal establishment in 1980. Loggerheads (Caretta caretta) are the most frequently stranded species comprising 83% of all reports. Kemp's ridley (Lepidochelys kempi) are the second most frequently stranded species, accounting for 7% of all reports.

Strandings herein are defined as turtles which wash ashore dead, dying, or injured; or which are found floating in nearshore waters in a similar condition. Strandings examined are restricted to "wild" turtles only, known headstarted turtles are not included. Numbers presented are considered minimum stranding figures, as they are reported strandings only, not all stranding events. Effort expended in the collection of stranding data varies between years and geographical regions. Additionally, these figures are considered minimum mortality figures, representing an unknown percentage of total at-sea mortality.

This report, prepared as a background document for the 1987 Kemp's ridley working group meeting, summarizes information on Kemp's ridley strandings in the U.S. during the period 1980 - 1987. Data are extracted from the centralized STSSN data base maintained at the National Marine Fisheries Service - Miami Laboratory. All records received prior to 15 October 1987 (data summary date) are included. Information for 1987 is therefore incomplete.

The efforts and contributions of all STSSN coordinating personnel, state coordinators, and data collectors are acknowledged and sincerely appreciated.

Table 1. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported by year and region of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

	<u>WGULF</u>	<u>EGULF</u>	<u>SEUS</u>	<u>NEUS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980	14	4	11	23	52
1981	13	3	15	23	54
1982	27	2	27	9	65
1983	54	2	21	21	98
1984	59	4	3	18	84
1985	48	1	22	53	124
1986	239	10	36	54	339
1987	58	14	15	6	93
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TOTAL	512	40	150	207	909

# L. KEMPI STRANDINGS (1980 - 1987)

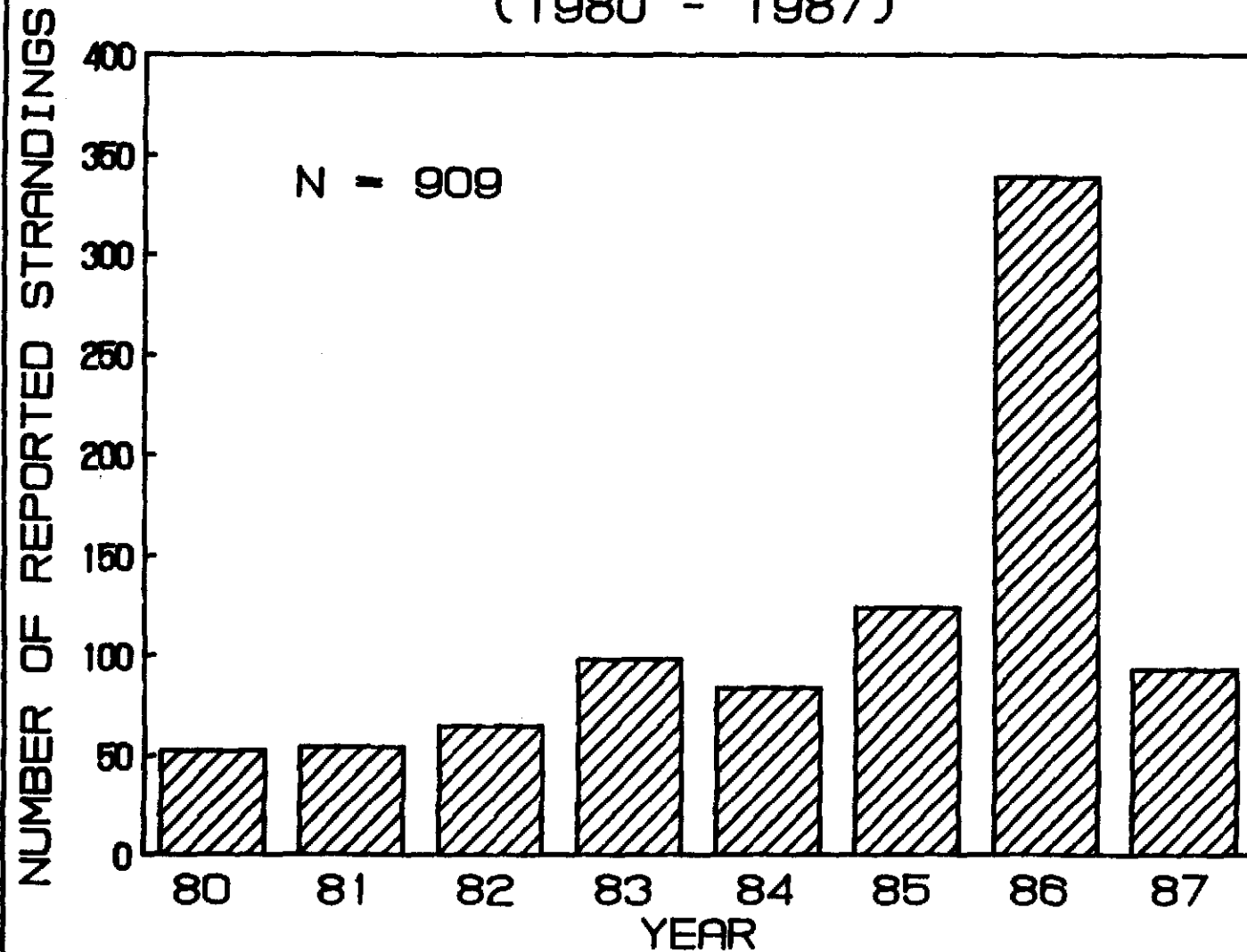


Figure 1. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts by year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

L. KEMPI STRANDINGS  
WGULF (1980 - 1987)

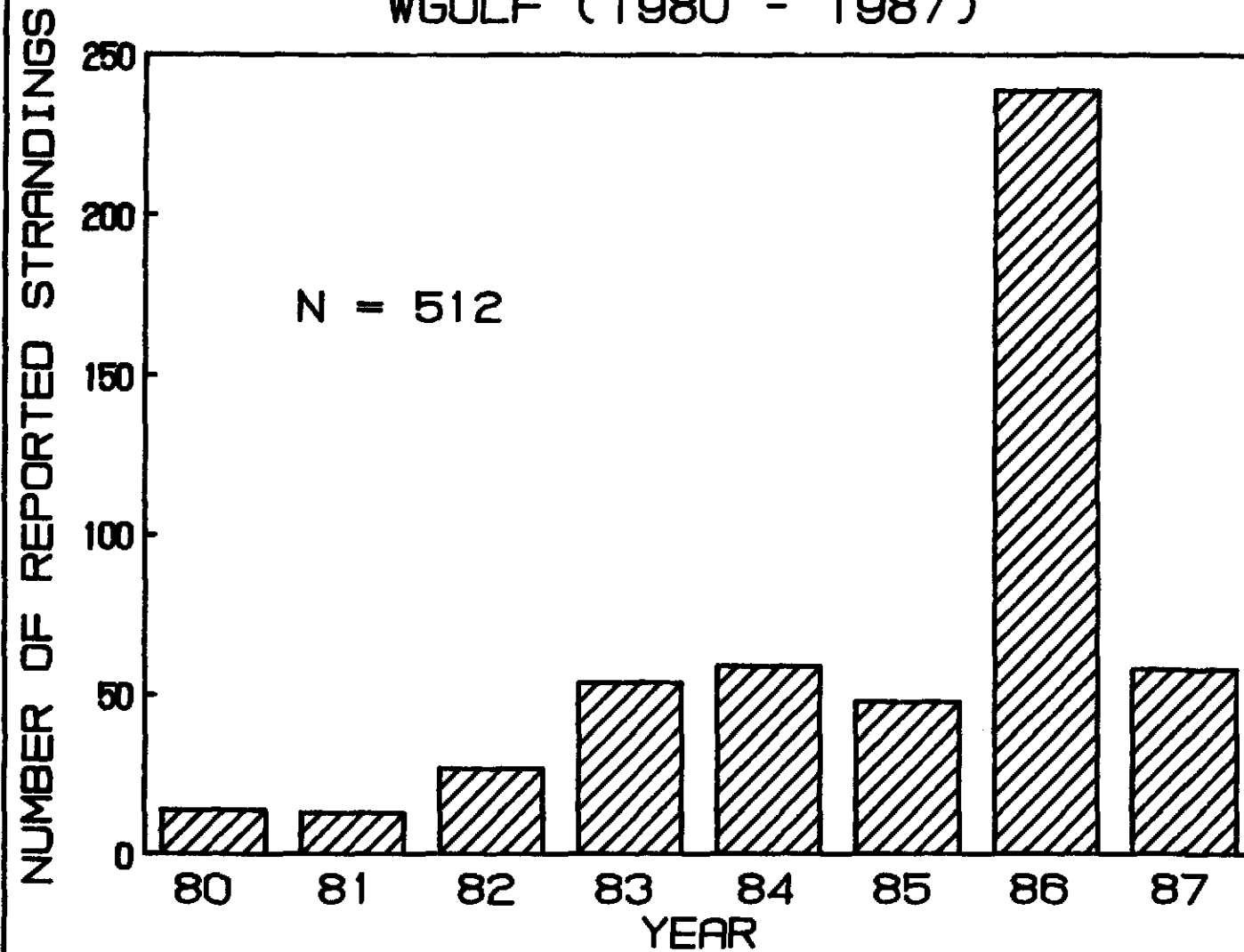
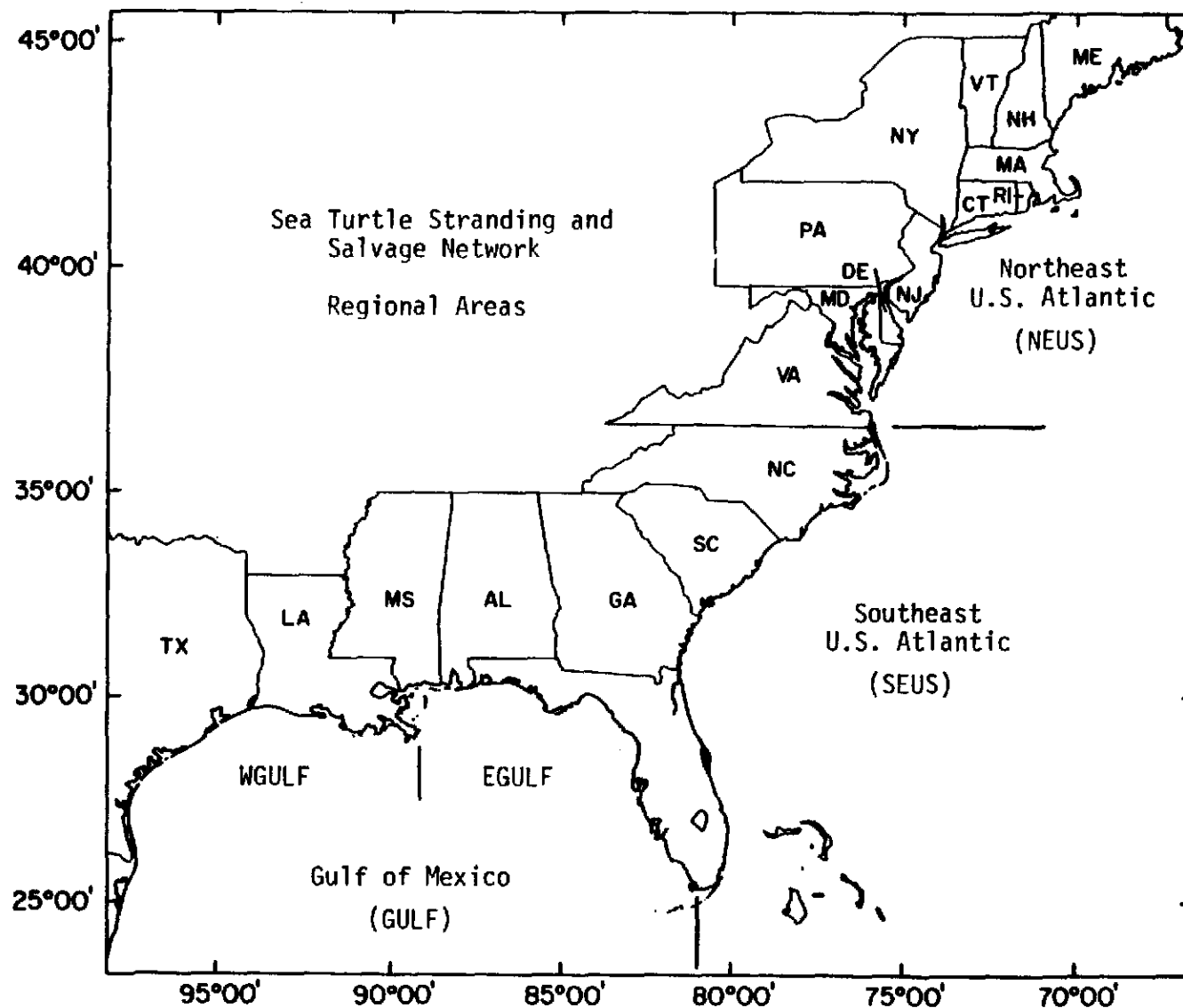


Figure 2. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the western Gulf of Mexico by year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.



Regional areas and region codes of the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network, U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas.

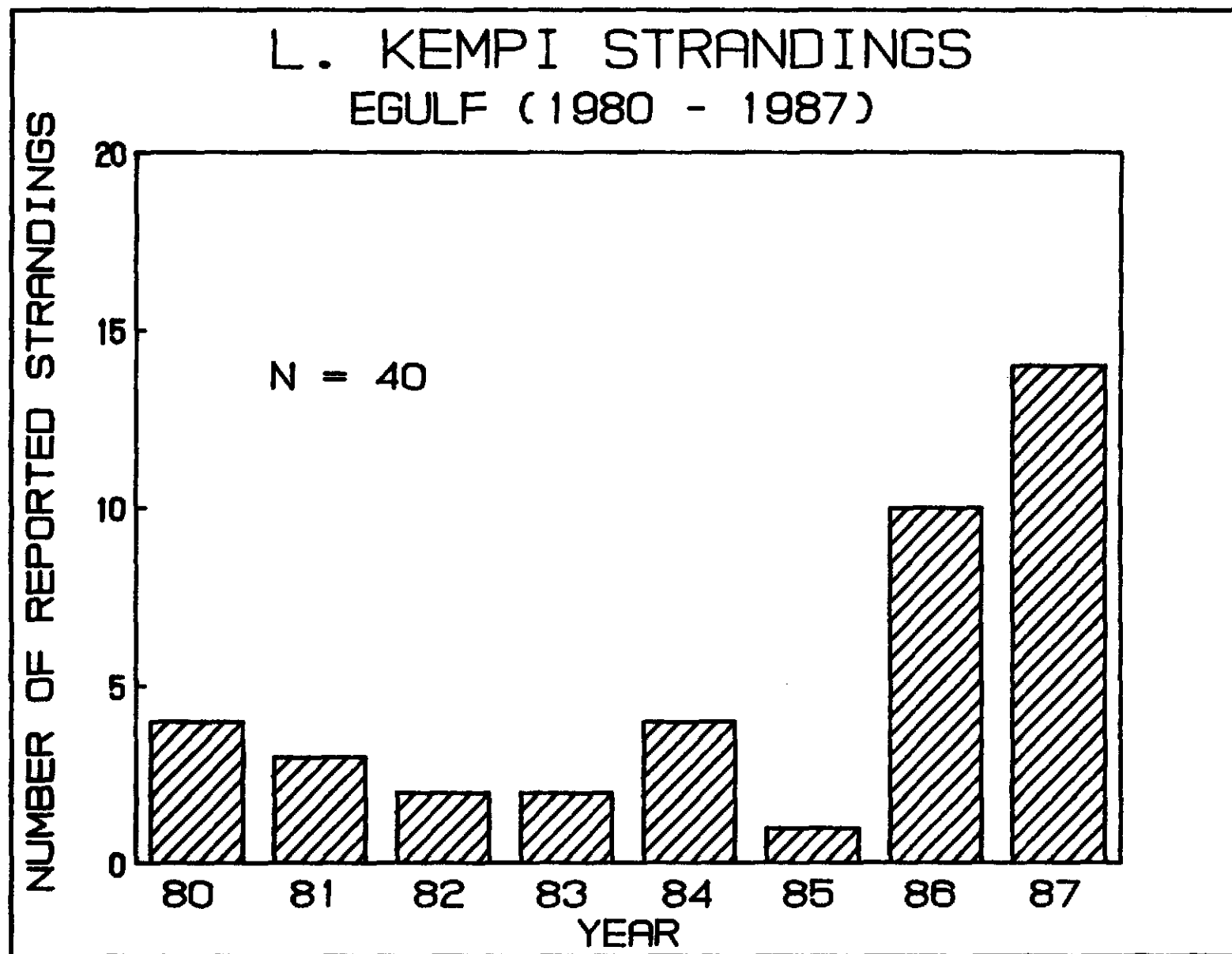


Figure 3. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the eastern Gulf of Mexico by year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

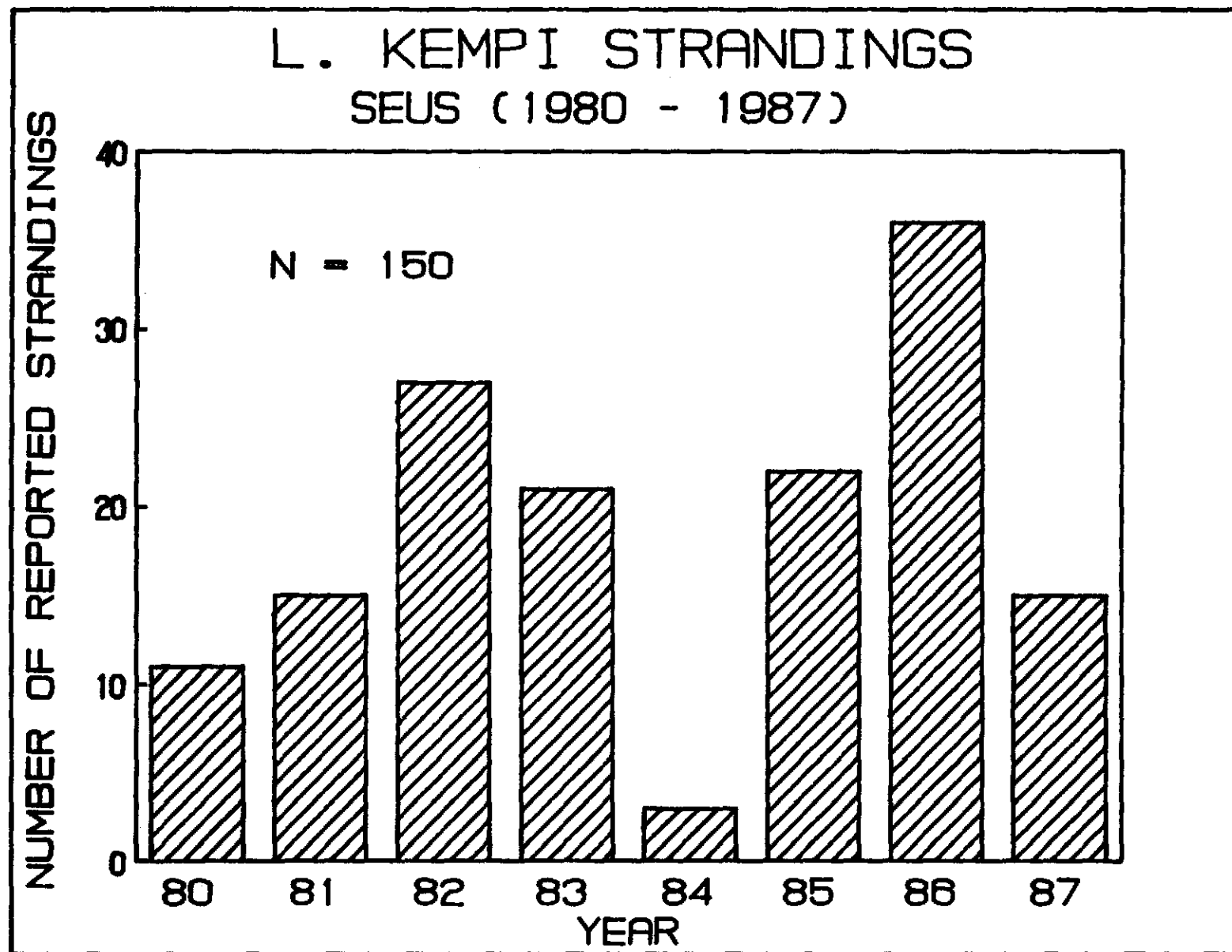


Figure 4. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the southeast U.S. Atlantic by year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.



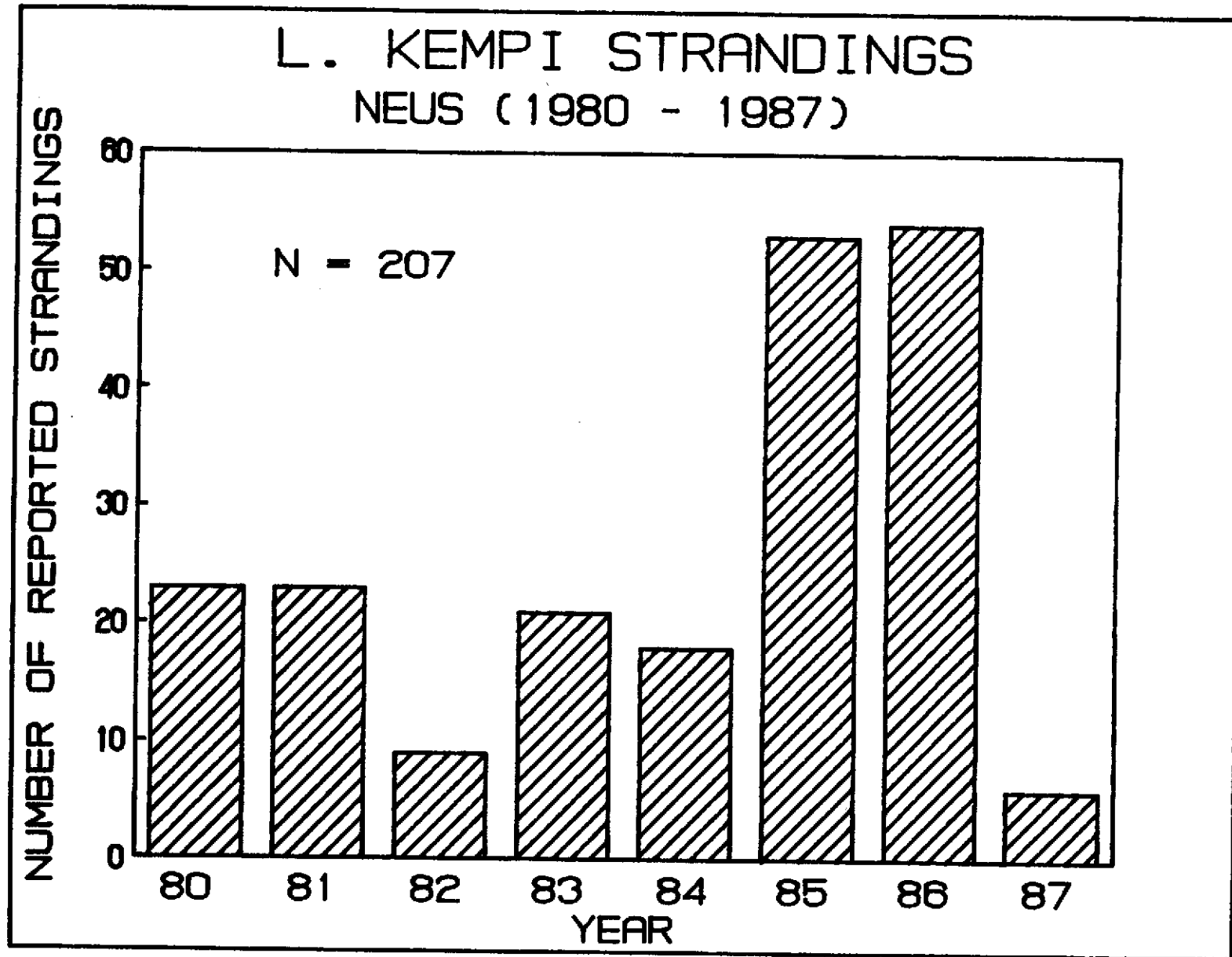


Figure 5. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the northeast U.S. Atlantic by year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

Table 2. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the eastern Gulf of Mexico by statistical zone and year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

<u>STAT</u> <u>ZONE</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	9
5	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	5	10
6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
8	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	5
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	1	1	0	0	0	1	6	1	10
12	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
TOTAL	4	2	2	2	3	1	10	14	38

Table 3. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the western Gulf of Mexico by statistical zone and year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

<u>STAT</u> <u>ZONE</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
13	0	1	0	0	7	3	7	4	22
14	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	6
15	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
16	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
17	1	0	0	1	9	1	91	13	116
18	0	6	3	38	31	28	94	10	210
19	1	4	3	4	2	1	14	9	38
20	9	2	15	11	10	12	22	17	98
21	2	0	5	0	0	3	4	1	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>510</b>

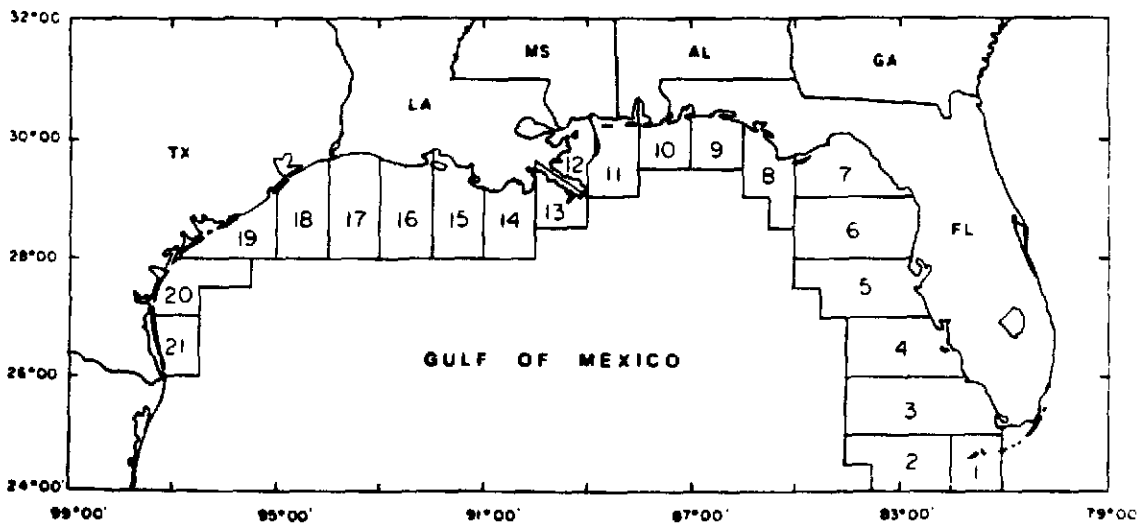
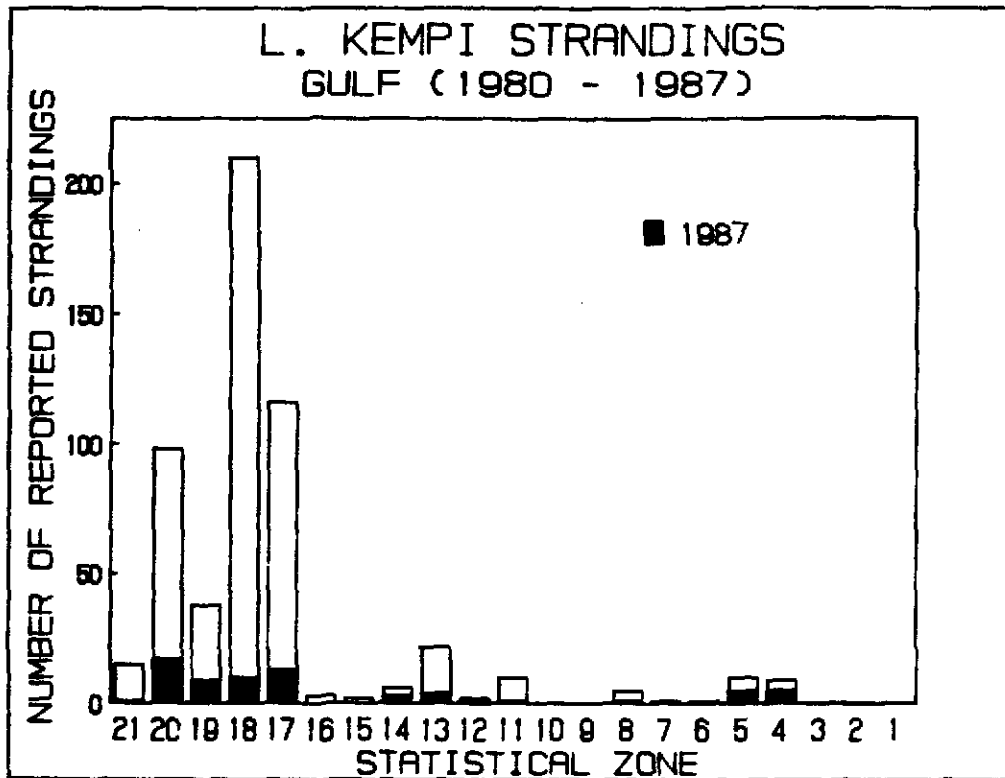


Figure 6. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the Gulf of Mexico by statistical zone, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

Table 4. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the southeast U.S. Atlantic by statistical zone and year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

<u>STAT</u> <u>ZONE</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
27	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
28	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	5
29	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	0	6
30	3	5	7	10	0	11	12	0	48
31	4	0	9	7	2	5	4	6	37
32	1	4	2	2	0	2	4	4	19
33	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	6
34	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
35	0	4	5	0	0	2	3	2	16
36*	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
TOTAL	11	15	27	21	3	22	36	15	150

\*North Carolina portion of zone 36 only

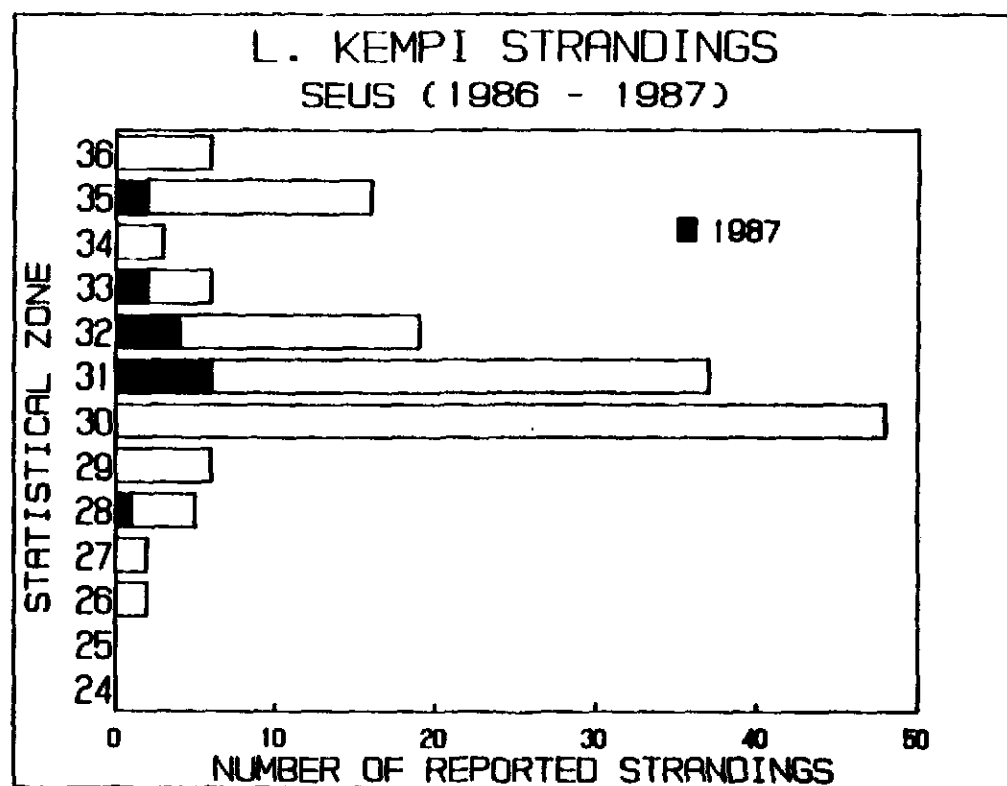
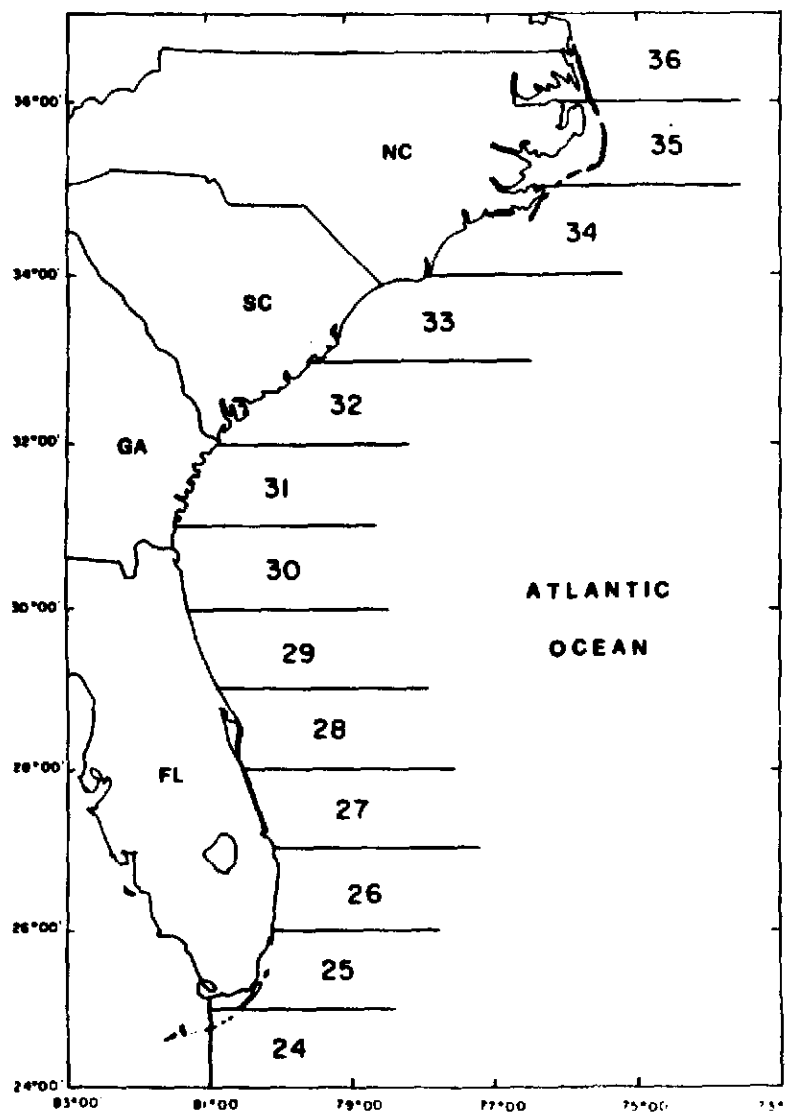


Figure 7. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the southeast U.S. Atlantic by statistical zone, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

Table 5. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the northeast U.S. Atlantic by statistical zone and year of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

<u>STAT ZONE</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
36*	3	1	0	1	0	0	4	0	9
37	7	9	3	2	9	0	2	1	33
38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
40	1	1	0	4	0	35	21	3	65
41	12	12	3	0	8	15	21	1	72
42	0	0	2	0	0	1	5	1	9
43	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>192</b>

\*Virginia portion of zone 36 only

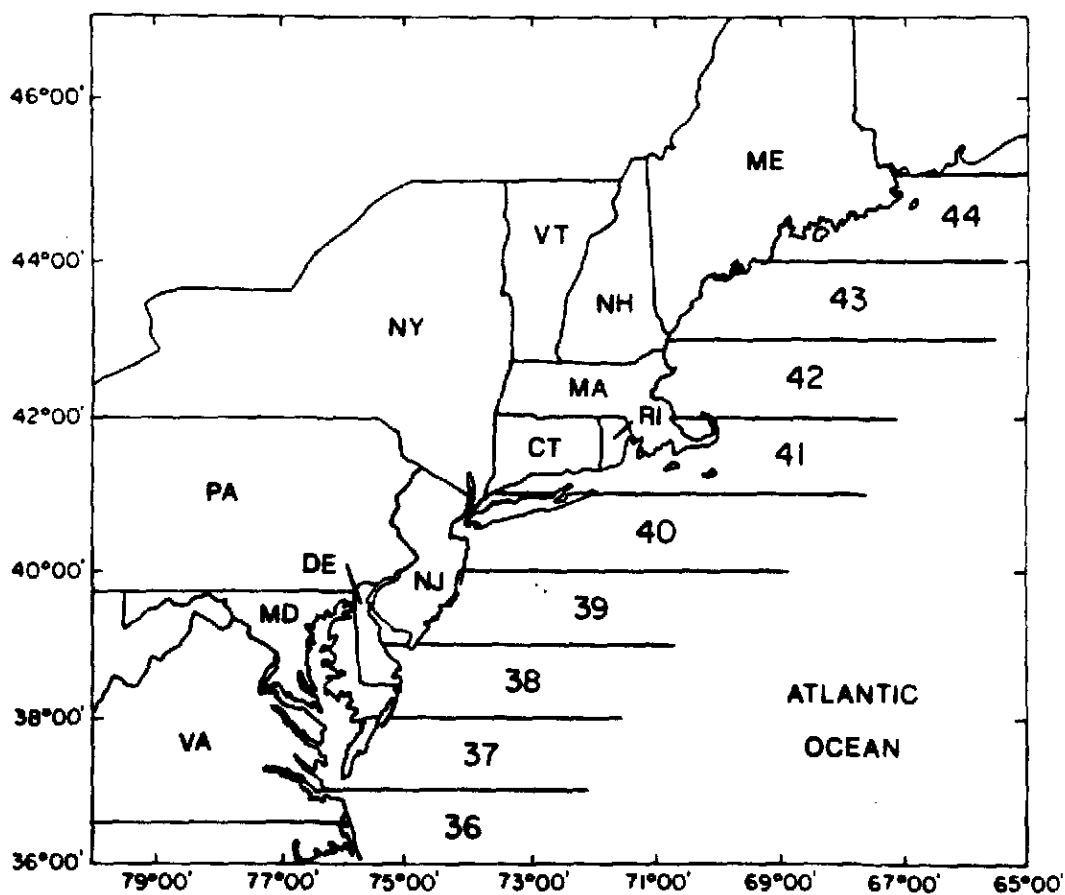
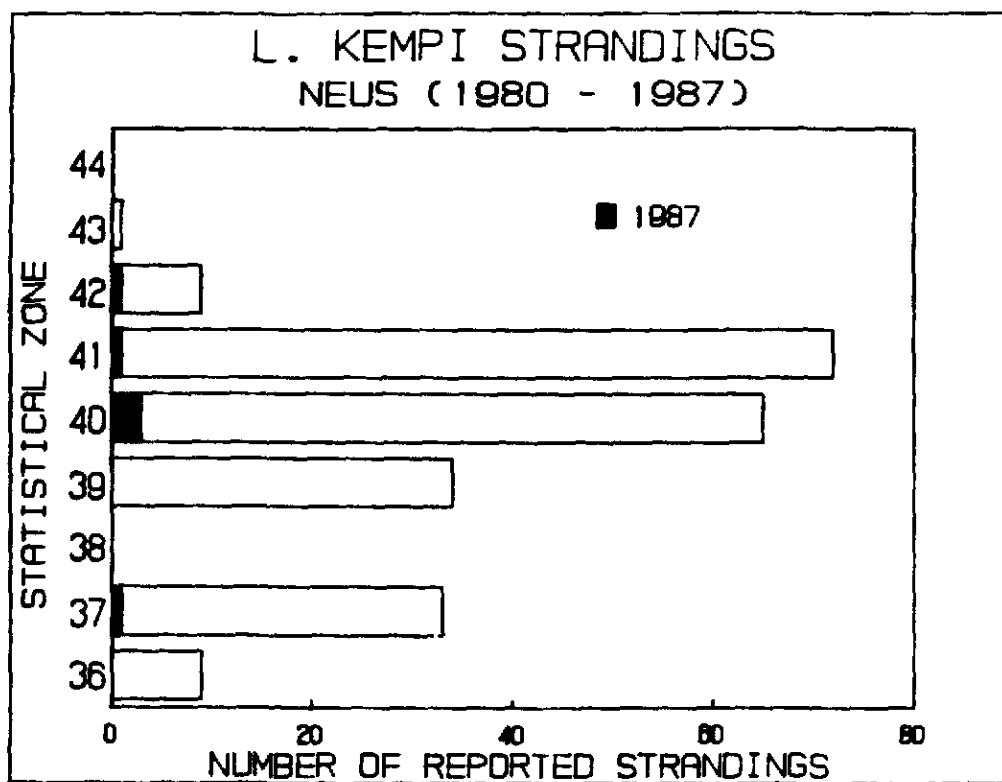


Figure 8. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the northeast U.S. Atlantic by statistical zone, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.



Table 6. Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the western Gulf of Mexico by year and month of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	7	0	2	1	0	14
1981	0	0	0	1	2	0	5	0	0	1	3	1	13
1982	0	1	3	4	3	3	6	1	1	1	3	1	27
1983	0	0	0	2	2	5	17	0	10	11	7	0	54
1984	1	0	2	10	3	3	5	13	9	7	5	1	59
1985	0	0	4	7	10	5	3	2	5	2	9	1	48
1986	0	1	24	54	31	39	21	42	18	5	4	0	239
1987	0	2	6	12	14	3	5	10	6	*	*	*	58
TOTAL	1	4	39	92	65	58	64	75	49	29	32	4	512

\*Data not yet received

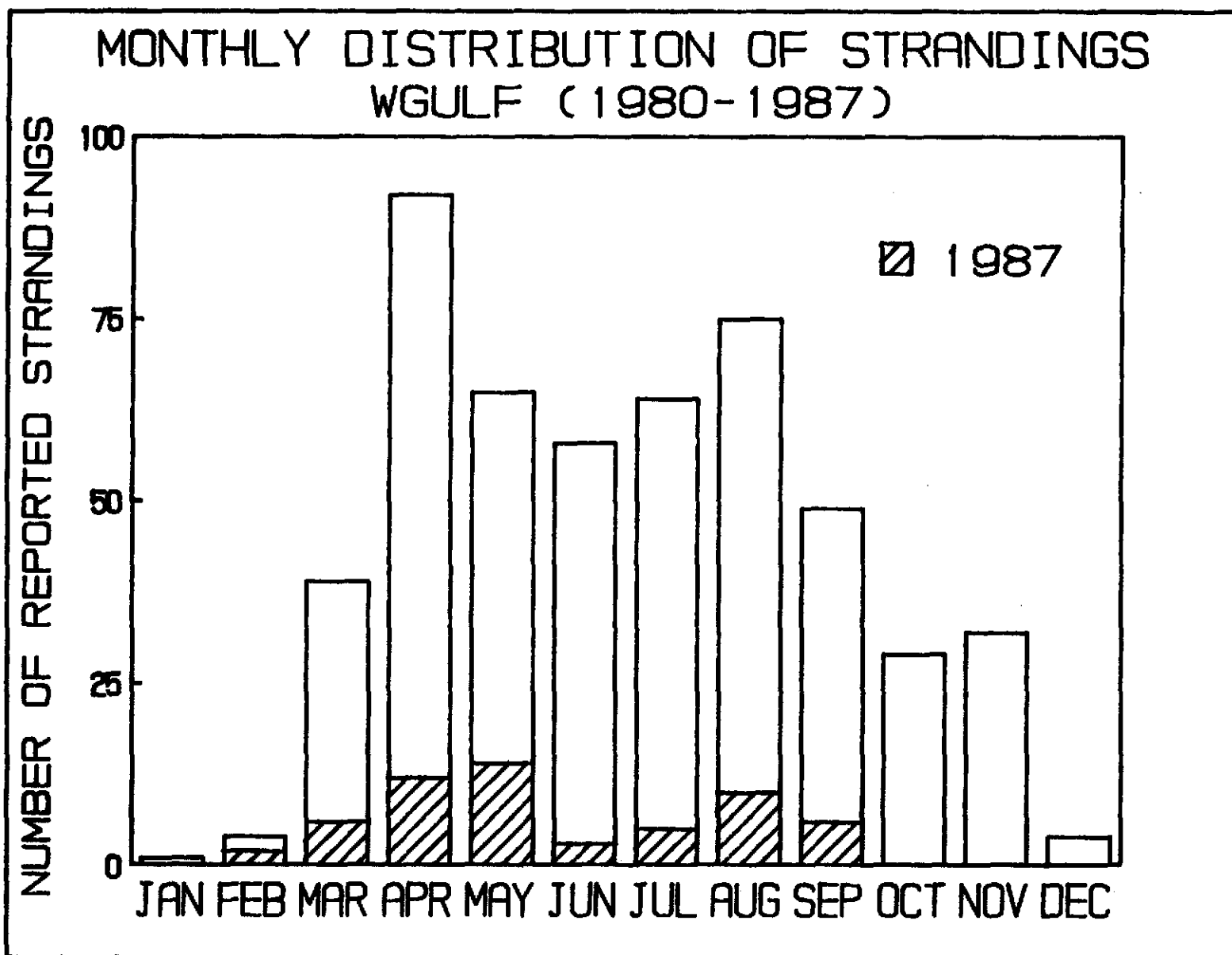


Figure 9. Monthly distribution of *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the western Gulf of Mexico, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

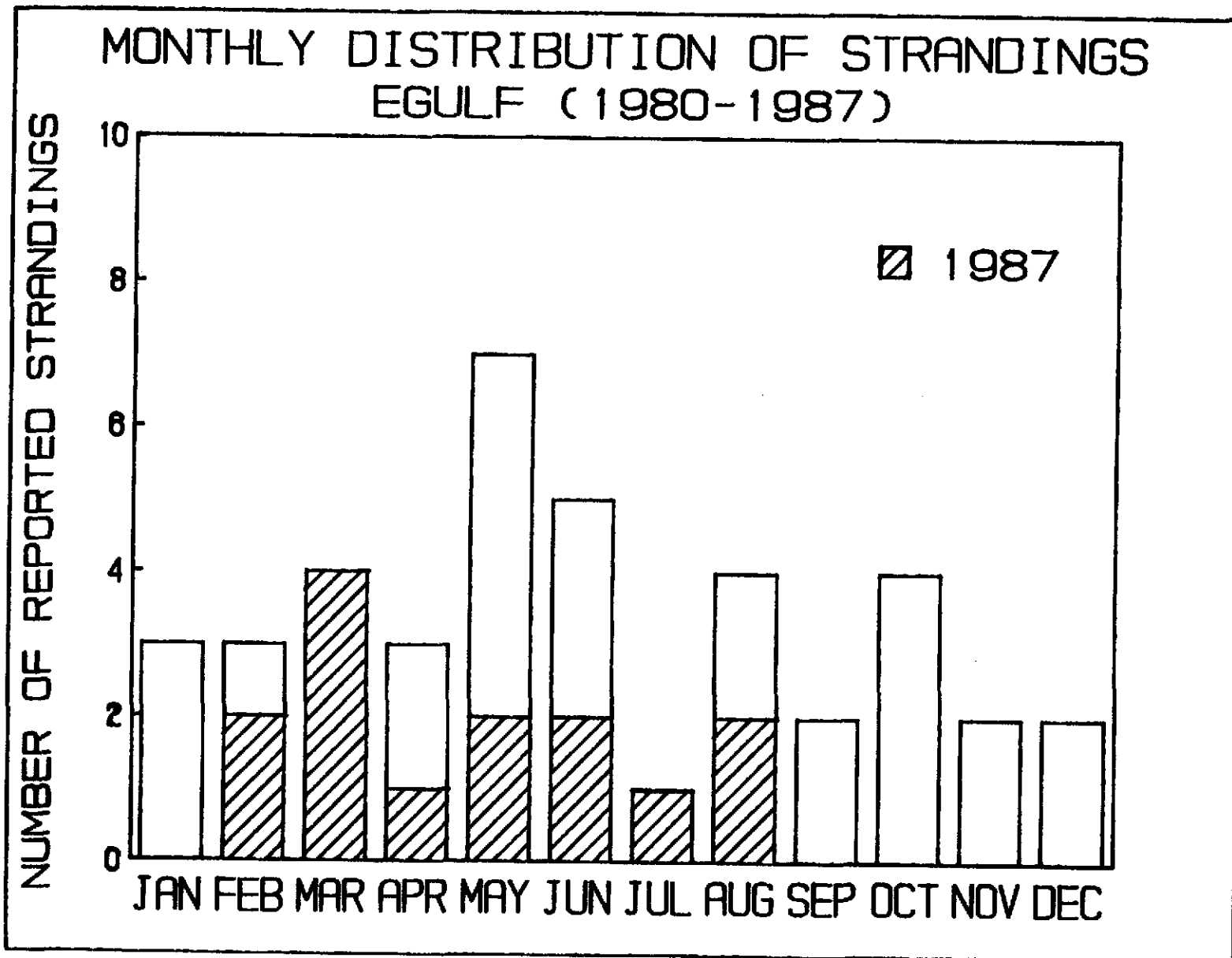


Figure 10. Monthly distribution of *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the eastern Gulf of Mexico, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

Table 7. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the eastern Gulf of Mexico by year and month of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
1981	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3
1982	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
1983	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
1984	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	4
1985	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
1986	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	10
1987	0	2	4	1	2	2	1	2	0	*	*	*	14
TOTAL	3	3	4	3	7	5	1	4	2	4	2	2	40

\*Data not yet received

Table 8. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the southeast U.S. Atlantic by year and month of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	1	1	2	1	0	11
1981	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	3	5	15
1982	1	0	0	0	1	6	1	2	3	2	8	3	27
1983	1	1	0	0	2	3	2	2	1	0	9	0	21
1984	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3
1985	2	0	0	3	0	1	3	0	2	2	4	5	22
1986	0	2	2	0	3	5	1	1	2	5	12	3	36
1987	1	0	1	0	2	8	1	2	0	*	*	*	15
TOTAL	5	3	4	3	11	23	14	9	11	13	37	17	150

\*Data not yet received

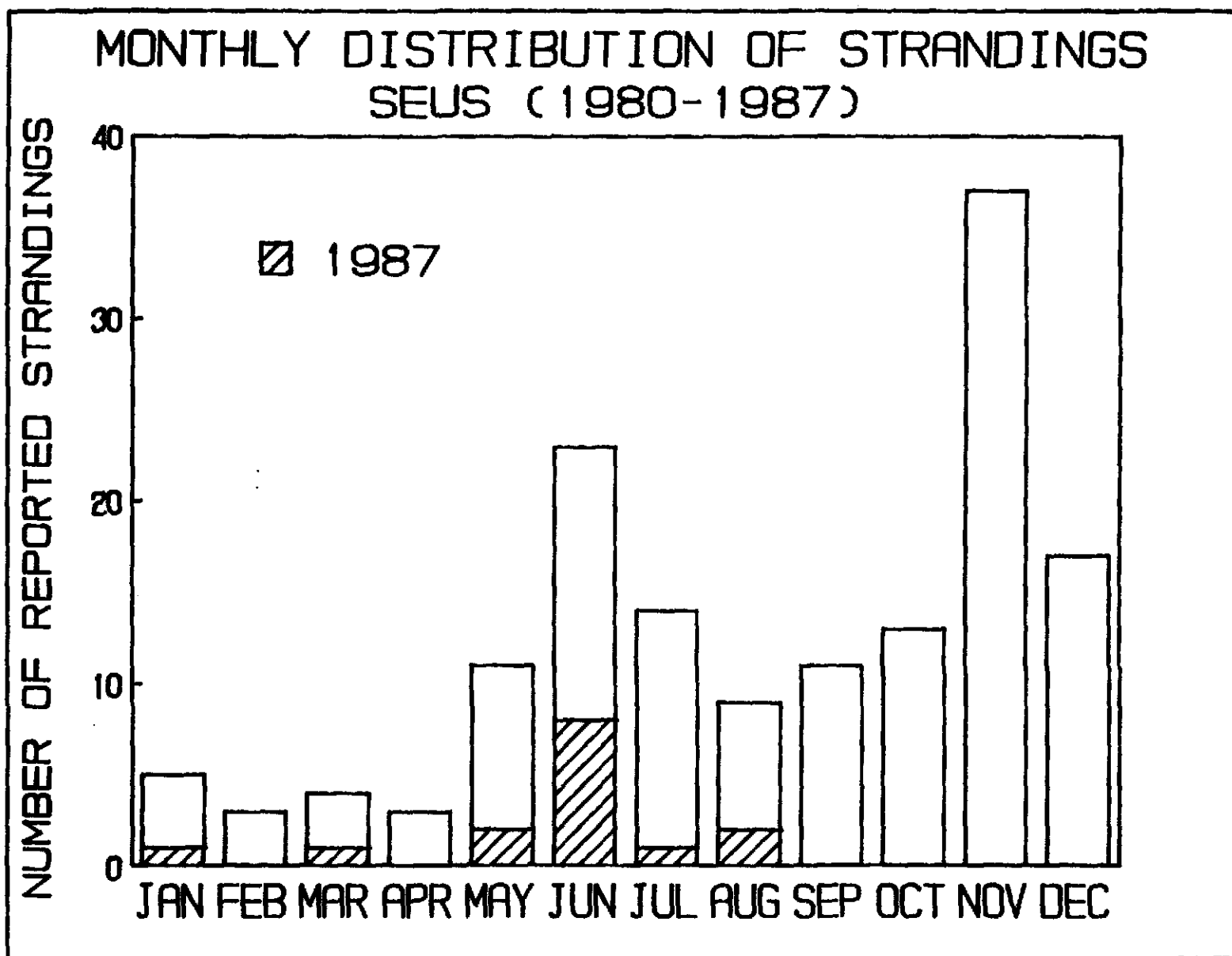


Figure 11. Monthly distribution of Lepidochelys kempi strandings reported from the southeast U.S. Atlantic, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

Table 9. *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the northeast U.S. Atlantic by year and month of occurrence, 1980 - 1987. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

	<u>JAN</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>	<u>MAY</u>	<u>JUN</u>	<u>JUL</u>	<u>AUG</u>	<u>SEP</u>	<u>OCT</u>	<u>NOV</u>	<u>DEC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1980	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	3	13	0	23
1981	0	0	0	0	0	6	3	1	1	0	11	1	23
1982	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	9
1983	1	0	0	0	2	9	1	3	2	1	1	0	21
1984	0	0	0	0	1	6	2	0	0	0	8	1	18
1985	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	10	38	53
1986	3	1	2	1	0	1	1	4	1	3	9	28	54
1987	4	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	*	*	*	6
TOTAL	8	1	3	4	7	26	9	11	6	8	53	70	207

\*Data not yet received

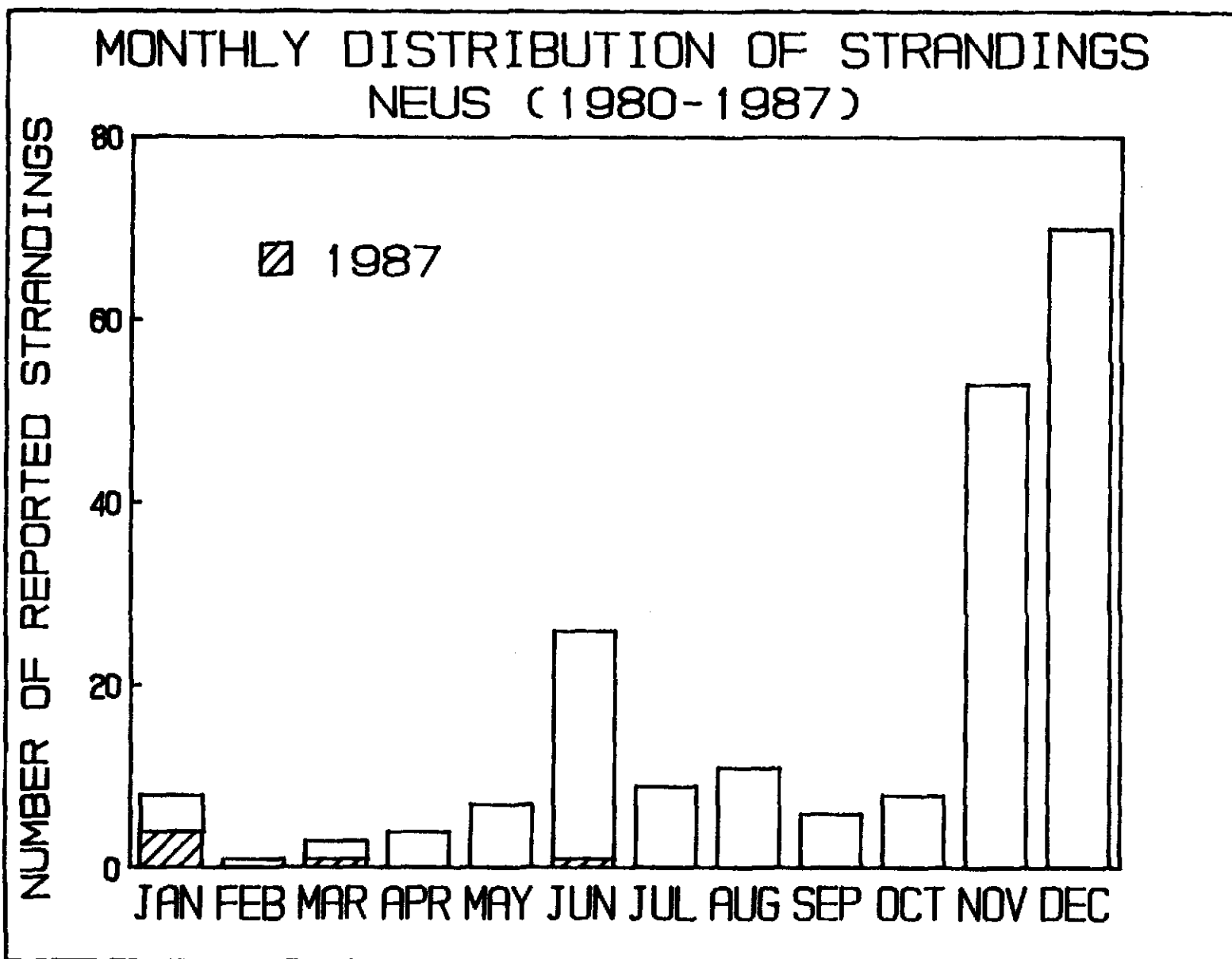


Figure 12. Monthly distribution of *Lepidochelys kempi* strandings reported from the northeast U.S. Atlantic, 1980 - 1987 combined. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.



Table 10. Size class frequencies of stranded *Lepidochelys kempi* reported from the GULF OF MEXICO, 1980 - 1987. Only positively identified turtles are included, measurement is carapace length over the curve. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

CARAPACE LENGTH OVER THE CURVE (N = 371)

<u>Size Class (cm)</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
0.1 - 9.9	7	1.9	1.9
10.0 - 19.9	2	0.5	2.4
20.0 - 29.9	101	27.2	29.6
30.0 - 39.9	132	35.6	65.2
40.0 - 49.9	45	12.1	77.3
50.0 - 59.9	21	5.7	83.0
60.0 - 69.9	52	14.0	97.0
70.0 - 79.9	10	2.7	99.7
80.0 - 89.9	1	0.3	100.0

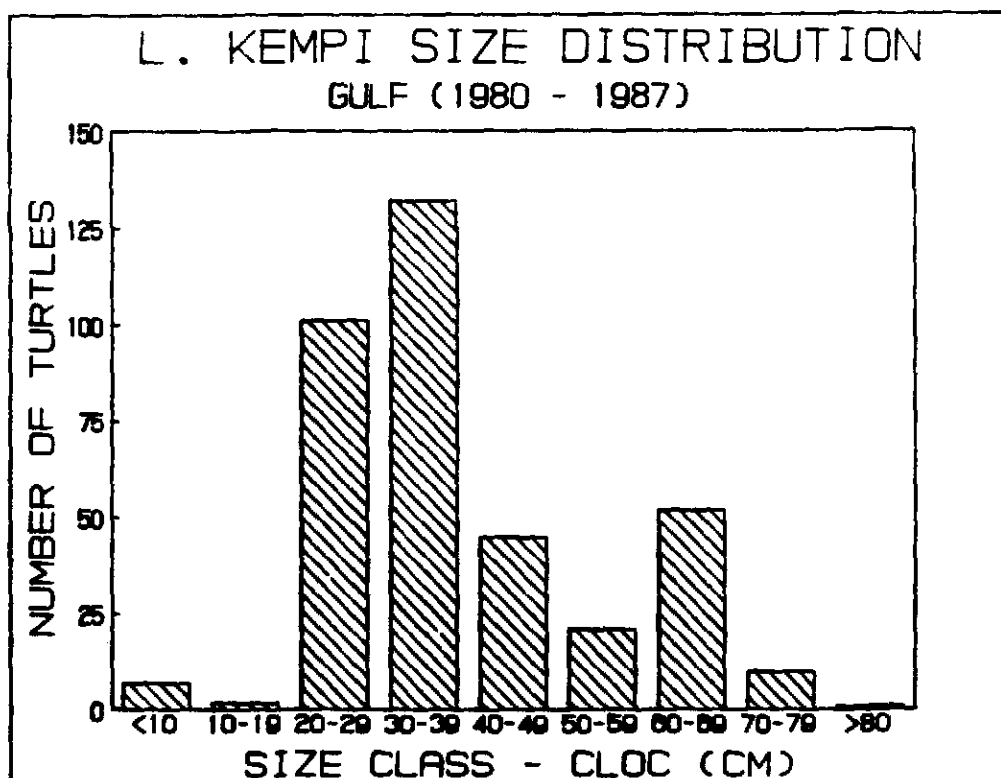


Table 11. Size class frequencies of stranded *Lepidochelys kemp* reported from the SOUTHEAST U.S. ATLANTIC, 1980 - 1987. Only positively identified turtles are included, measurement is carapace length over the curve. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

CARAPACE LENGTH OVER THE CURVE (N = 91)

<u>Size Class (cm)</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
0.1 - 9.9	0	0.0	0.0
10.0 - 19.9	0	0.0	0.0
20.0 - 29.9	10	11.0	11.0
30.0 - 39.9	40	44.0	55.0
40.0 - 49.9	24	26.4	81.4
50.0 - 59.9	10	11.0	92.4
60.0 - 69.9	7	7.7	100.1
70.0 - 79.9	0	0.0	100.1
80.0 - 89.9	0	0.0	100.1

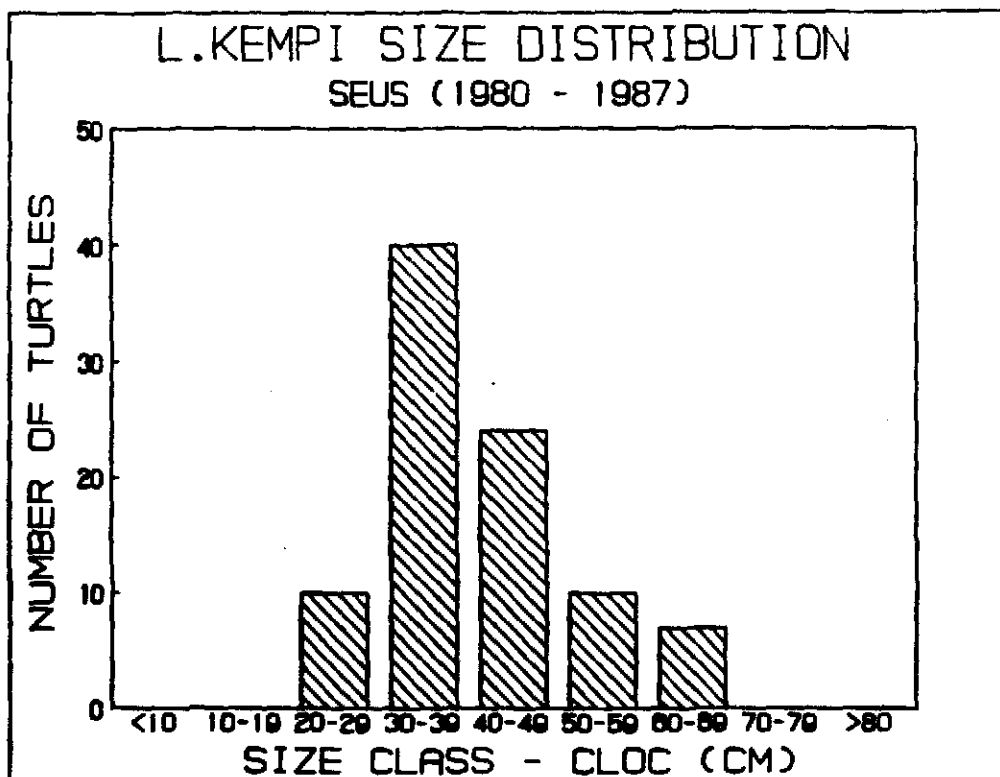


Table 12. Size class frequencies of stranded *Lepidochelys kemp*i reported from the NORTHEAST U.S. ATLANTIC, 1980 - 1987. Only positively identified turtles are included, measurement is carapace length over the curve. Wild turtles only, data received as of 15 October 1987.

CARAPACE LENGTH OVER THE CURVE (N = 69)

<u>Size Class (cm)</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cumulative Percent</u>
0.1 - 9.9	0	0.0	0.0
10.0 - 19.9	0	0.0	0.0
20.0 - 29.9	31	44.9	44.9
30.0 - 39.9	23	33.3	78.2
40.0 - 49.9	10	14.5	92.7
50.0 - 59.9	3	4.3	97.0
60.0 - 69.9	2	2.9	99.9
70.0 - 79.9	0	0.0	99.9
80.0 - 89.9	0	0.0	99.9

